

a first vessel, at a first pressure, containing comminuted cellulosic fibrous material, and having a top, a bottom, and an outlet adjacent said bottom;

a conduit having an inlet directly connected to and communicating with the outlet of said first vessel, and an outlet;

a second vessel, having a width dimension greater than said conduit, for receiving the cellulosic material from said conduit and having a level of liquid therein;
and

a slurry pump having an inlet for receiving material from the second vessel and an outlet operatively connected to the inlet of said digester.

14. (original) A system as recited in claim 13 further comprising a metering device between and connecting said first vessel and said conduit inlet.

15. (original) A system as recited in claim 13 further comprising a pressure-isolation device between and connecting said first vessel and said conduit inlet.

16. (original) A system as recited in claim 13 wherein said first vessel comprises a device which steams comminuted cellulosic fibrous material.

17. (original) A system as recited in claim 13 wherein said second vessel comprises a tank having a substantially right cylinder upper portion; and a substantially right circular cone frustum lower portion, said tank and said conduit being substantially concentric and in liquid communication with each other.

18-22. (canceled)

23. (canceled)

24-48. (canceled)